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FEBRUARY 25, 2016

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UPTON House has won an award for its recreation of wartime Britain.

It was voted the top attraction in the Exhibitions and Programming category for the National Trust's Everything Speaks awards.

The exhibition, Banking for Victory, told the story of when the house converted into a 1940s headquarters for the Bearsted merchant bank.

Visitors could sit at old desks, read meeting minutes and sew period garments.

General manager Julie Smith said: "I'm thrilled that the painstaking research, the authenticity and attention to detail and the hard work has been recognised."

Mary Berry visited Upton House for exhibition launch



## Budget cuts leave children's services with uncertain futures

# FEARS RISING FOR CENTRES

CHILDREN'S centre users should expect more cuts to the county's vital services next year, campaigners in Banbury have warned.

It follows last week's Oxfordshire County Council budget meeting, where members negotiated over more than £69m of savings to be made in the next four years.

Following eight hours of discussions between party leaders, an agreement was reached that included reducing £2m of the money cut from early intervention hubs and children centres.

But this means £15.2m of savings across the board will have to be found over the next few years.

Of that figure, £10.3m must be decided by finance bosses in the next 12 months. Members of the Banbury and Bicester Labour Group have criticised the final budget, and warned similar cuts should be expected next year.

Speaking after the vote, party chairman Terry Davis, who has campaigned against the cuts to services, said: "It is clear that these cuts were a step too far."

"In the end, although the Conservative-Independent alliance agreed to Labour's proposals, there are no guarantees the centres will stay open beyond the next 12 months."

"We are concerned the Conservatives

**Kieran Davey**  
kdavey@nqo.com

and their councillor allies will seek to reintroduce these cuts again in 2017.

"If these centres are to be permanently saved, it's important the public maintains pressure on the county council over the next 12 months and beyond."

After the meeting, party leaders released a joint statement that said: "We felt strongly that, given the unprecedented financial position that Oxfordshire County Council in particular and local government in general is facing, we had come to a cross party agreement on what is best for Oxfordshire."

"These changes and the agreement we have made are also very much in response to feedback from local residents including those who spoke to the council earlier today."

Councillors heard from campaigners on issues including children centres and bus services.

The fate of early year services still remain in the balance, with most of the 44 centres in the county - including four in Banbury - still expected to close.

Discussions with groups, including charities and councils are ongoing about keeping more than 30 of the cen-

tres open through other means.

Among the other cuts decided by the county council last Tuesday were £1.5m taken from homeless services and £18m to adult social care.

The county councillor for Bloxham and Easington, and leader of Banbury Town Council, Kieron Mallon, claimed responsibility for instigating the budget negotiations.

He said: "Tough decisions will still take place over the coming months and years but this new budget will lessen the immediate impact on users of the services we provide and help new ways of working to be explored further."

"I am extremely proud to have been the instigator that has led to this consensus county budget being set."



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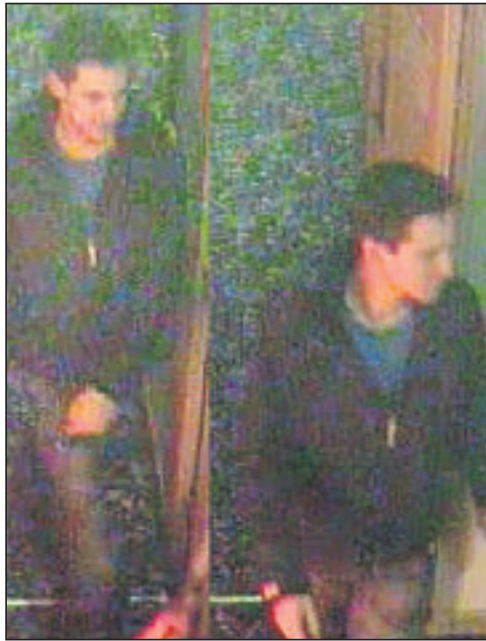
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Police hunt for man linked to racist attack at bowling alley

## CCTV plea after racist abuse

A WOMAN was verbally and racially abused by a man as she was leaving a bowling alley in Banbury. The incident happened at 11pm on January 29 at the Lakeside Superbowl in George Street.

Police are keen to talk to the man pictured in the two security camera images above, in connection with their investigation. Call 101 with any information.

# MP insists she'd defy Cameron over HS2

Victoria Prentis says she's worried about construction traffic

**Kieran Davey**  
kdavey@nqo.com

NORTH Oxfordshire MP Victoria Prentis claims she would defy David Cameron over her opposition to HS2.

In an exclusive interview with the *Banbury Cake*, the Banbury politician said she would not back down on the high speed rail link, despite most Conservative MPs supporting the scheme.

The railway's construction could see hundreds of HGV's travelling through Banbury and up the A361, through neighbouring villages, every day.

When asked on what issues she would vote against the government – and the prime minister – on she said: "Definitely when it comes to HS2. A lot of people in my constituency have been very upset about this and I want



MP Victoria Prentis is interviewed by reporter Kieran Davey

to support them." The MP has previously called for a restriction on vehicle numbers during construction of the high-speed rail link.

She said: "I am concerned about the traffic go-

ing through Banbury and it means the whole area could be blocked while construction is going on.

"It is blindingly obvious that two HGVs cannot pass on some of these A roads.

"Part of the problem is that

the people in charge of the scheme do not foresee these problems until they are faced with them.

"This is one of the problems we have had since the beginning.

"They have been able to think about things at leisure but they have been thrust into these problems at the last minute.

"I have been talking to Oxfordshire County Council about places like South Newington, and Wardington is another area I am very concerned about.

"We have an area that is changing with a huge level of development and HS2 is another layer on top of that."

Ms Prentis said a possible solution could be creating a 'conveyor belt'-style track running near to the HS2 line to transfer spoil, rather than drive it through villages.

She added: "There has been a lot of growth though in both Bicester and Banbury. We now have a local plan and my only concern is that we make sure we stick to it.

"What I do want to push forward is more money to be spent on infrastructure, and I am asking for more to be given for new schools and roads."

The first phase of HS2 will involve going through the Chilterns to Birmingham.

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Some 90 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on the streets of Oxfordshire in November

# Worries of rise in rough sleepers

Councillors concerned about the impact of cuts to support for homeless

HEALTH leaders fear cuts to homeless services could see the number of rough sleepers across the county rise into the hundreds.

The most recent estimate from November revealed 90 people were sleeping on Oxfordshire's streets – including 21 in the Cherwell area.

County-wide the figure is 22 more than the target set for the districts and Oxford City Council.

It comes as a new project for Cherwell is launched to help residents get rough sleepers off the street by reporting them through the national Street Link service. Through this, people can raise concerns about an individual, who will then be assessed

and offered support services and accommodation.

Cherwell District Council lead member for housing John Donaldson said: "There a lot of myths surrounding rough sleeping and homelessness which we are working hard to clarify so that people who are affected have a better understanding of the help available.

"Although there are only a handful of rough sleepers in the district, we believe that one case is one too many so are working with other agencies to try and tackle the issue."

A report on homelessness across Oxfordshire was presented to the county's Health Improvement Partnership Board last week, with councillors expressing concerns over the possible impact of cuts.

At the meeting last Thursday, committee chairman Ed Turner said: "Rough sleepers is a real concern.

"If the rough sleeping number

is 90 now, and if the services are being deleted, we would be doing rather well if we were under a couple of hundred."

The report showed the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation, based on information from September, was 218 – with 128 of them in Oxford – and 20 homeless households in bed and breakfasts.

It means the councils are on course to miss the year-on-year target of reducing the number to fewer than 192 by March.

Homelessness is not a county council responsibility, but the local authority puts cash towards it through 'housing related support' services.

These help homeless people regain independence by helping to house them, improve their health, apply for benefits and provide training.

At its budget meeting last Tuesday, the county council agreed to slash this support by 65 per cent – about £1.5m.

## Man who 'thought it would be fun to stab someone' is handed four-year jail term

A MAN who left a Tesco store manager fearing for his life after brandishing a knife told officers he thought it would be "fun" to stab someone.

Bartolomiej Kubacz, of Marlborough Place, Banbury, was handed a four-year jail term at Oxford Crown Court on Tuesday after admitting a spate of offences between January and September last year.

The 24-year-old smirked as prosecutor Edward Hollingsworth recalled the offences, which included threatening manager Richard Bennett with a knife while he was working at Tesco Extra, in Lockheed Close, Banbury.

Sentencing, Judge Ian Pringle said: "It's clear you have absolutely no remorse for the way that you behaved."

Mr Hollingsworth said Mr Bennett approached the defendant after spotting him eating chicken from the deli counter at about 9.15pm on September 8.

He said Mr Bennett spoke to Kubacz again shortly before midnight and asked him to pay for the £64.32 worth of alcohol he had drunk while in the store.

The prosecutor said the "cold and calm" defendant then pulled a knife from his jeans pocket, pointing it at his victim.

Mr Hollingsworth added: "Mr

Bennett was genuinely afraid he would not see his family again."

Kubacz threw oranges at officers when they arrived, before he was detained at Littlemore Hospital under the mental health act. He also attacked hospital staff Pauline Kuzanga and Osilu Hassan on September 24.

During police interviews, Kubacz had said he was "curious" to know how it felt to stab someone. He said: "I wanted to stab someone because I thought it would be fun."

Kubacz also admitted one count of attempted burglary and causing criminal damage at Abingdon police station.

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## MAN HANDS HIMSELF IN AT POLICE STATION IN CONNECTION WITH SEXUAL ASSAULT OF WOMAN

**BANBURY:** A 31-year-old man walked into a police station and handed himself in after a sexual assault at a Poundland store.

The man, from Banbury, was arrested by officers at Banbury Police Station last Monday.

It comes after a woman in her 20s was sexually assaulted at the Malthouse Walk store on February 9.

## CALL GOES OUT FOR MORRIS MEN

**N OXON:** Adderbury Village Morris Men is on the hunt for new members to help carry on the long-standing British tradition.

The group, founded in 1976, takes part in a variety of events and festivals throughout the year. In previous years the group has also shown off its dancing skills in France and Belgium.

No experience is needed, and regular taster sessions will soon be held for new members. More information from John Ekers on 01869 811741.

## Volunteers sought for a right royal clean-up for Queen's birthday celebrations



**NORTH Oxfordshire's MP** has launched the Clean for the Queen campaign at Westminster in celebration of the monarch's 90th birthday.

More than 70 members of parliament joined Victoria Prentis on February 9 for the national campaign launch which is urging residents to tidy up their community.

Mrs Prentis has written to all the schools in North Oxfordshire to take part and launched the campaign locally at the Spiceball Park in Banbury.

At the Westminster event, she said: "It was brilliant to see so many of my colleagues coming together to launch this campaign at Parliament.

"It was also great fun, and everyone looked fantastic in

their T-shirts and high-vis jackets. I'm thrilled so many events are being organised across Britain, including in north Oxfordshire.

"Although the big litter pick will take place over March 4, 5 and 6, people can get involved whenever they like. It is the support and action people are taking, and not the dates, which are important.

"I really hope more people in my constituency will consider getting involved so together we can help mark the Queen's 90th birthday."

If you are taking part in community celebrations for the Queen's 90th birthday email Naomi Herring at naomi.herring@banburycake.co.uk

● Green team blitz streets to clean up estate – Page 12

## Company named as one of best

A BANBURY-BASED food and beverage company is one of several Oxfordshire companies who have been named in London Stock Exchange's 1000 companies to inspire Britain.

Thomas Franks Limited, of Brewery Lane, Banbury, is one of 13 firms from the county placed in the landmark report which identifies the fastest-growing and most dynamic small and medium sized businesses across the UK.

Xavier Rolet, chief executive of London Stock Exchange Group, said: "High growth small, medium businesses are the driving force behind the UK economy, developing the skills, jobs and

growth we need. But ambition alone is not enough, their success must be highlighted and their growth properly supported with appropriate finance.

"That's why this event is so important."

Chancellor of the exchequer George Osborne said the companies were "the backbone" of the British economy.

Mr Osborne added: "They create high-quality, well paid jobs, innovate and drive economic growth. This government fully understands the need to support ambitious entrepreneurs and ensures they can access the finance they need to grow."

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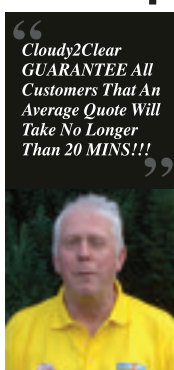
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& Abingdon areas and manager James Miller agrees that this approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated as both my customers and, obviously a body as nationally important as Which? now recognise."

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English historian and broadcaster Professor Michael Wood, Shakespeare expert Professor Stanley Wells, and Paul Edmondson, head of research and knowledge for the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, in the grounds of Bloxham School at the literary festival

## Historian speaks on works of Bard

Broadcaster appears at school as part of fourth literacy and faith festival

Kieran Davey  
kdavey@nqo.com

**HISTORIAN** Michael Wood waxed lyrically about the works of Shakespeare to guests at Bloxham School.

The broadcaster was speaking as part of the Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature, being held for the fourth time.

This year the festival also welcomed novelist Salley Vickers and retired judge Baroness Eliz-

abeth Butler-Sloss. The three-day event, which finished on Sunday, was the idea of former Banbury MP Sir Tony Baldry.

Festival director Sarah Meyrick said: "We had a really good weekend, with more visitors than ever before. We sold well over 2,000 tickets and all the events were humming.

"Someone said to me that the festival had come of age which feels like a real compliment.

"Our thanks to Sir Tony, whose idea it was in the first place, and all our volunteers and helpers in Bloxham who made it happen."

For his talk on Friday, Prof Wood – who presents *The History of China* on BBC Two – also discussed the family of the great writer. He was joined by Professor Stanley Wells, who has been



Prof Michael Wood during the talk on 'The Shakespeare Circle'

honorary president of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Activities were split into hour-long sessions with guests discussing the work of famous writers.

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# Full-time course for athletes



Bicester and Banbury College, which has teamed up with Banbury United to launch two full-time footballing study programmes for students

College and footballing side to launch study programme for athletes

Kieran Davey  
kdavey@nqo.com

YOUNGSTERS with a love of football have a new college course in which they can study key aspects of the sport thanks to a new partnership.

Banbury and Bicester College has teamed up with Banbury United to launch two full-time footballing study programmes.

The courses, which start in September, are designed for school leavers and will cover anatomy, physiology, nutrition, psychology, coaching and fitness training.

Students will also make use of Banbury United's Spencer Stadium and have the opportunity to play for one of the

club's sides. Club chairman Ronnie Johnson said: "As a community focused club, we are delighted to play our part in providing facilities and opportunities for young people in the local area to gain the skills and vocational qualifications they need for future careers in the expanding sports industry."

"We look forward to seeing the first students making use of our facilities from September, in what should be the start of a beneficial partnership between the club and college."

Students can choose from the one-year Level 2 or two-year Level 3 programme, and will complete a minimum of 12 hours a week.

This will also include professional coaching from United manager Mike Ford, and a weekly match day.

He said: "These new programmes will give students the opportunity to translate their love of football into a rewarding future career."

## Lent drive for safe water in Africa

CATHOLICS in Banbury are being urged to help provide clean and safe water across the world as part of a Lent-themed campaign.

Last year, parishes and schools in the town raised more than £3,500 by holding fundraising activities for the Fast Day Appeal.

Run by CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development), the money will help repair and provide water pumps in villages in Uganda, DR Congo and Zimbabwe.

CAFOD Banbury representative Julia Hood said: "Lent Fast Days are a great way of bringing people together and raising an incredible amount to help others."

"Lent is a time when we look to make a transformation in our lives. We therefore put our faith into action by ensuring as many people as possible have access to the basic right of safe and clean drinking water."

To donate to the appeal visit [cafod.org.uk](http://cafod.org.uk)

## Guilty sex offences teacher still working in school

A TEACHER found guilty of sexual offences at a top Edinburgh school is still working in classrooms at Bloxham School.

Scottish newspaper *The Herald* reported that Gordon Cruden escaped punishment at Edinburgh sheriff court despite being found guilty of three charges of indecent exposure.

The languages teacher, 62, was accused of knowingly

wearing a pair of trousers with a large hole in the crotch and sitting with his legs wide open to expose his genitals. The incidents, in the 1980s, were witnessed by three teenage boys.

Sheriff Kevin Drummond gave Mr Cruden an absolute discharge, meaning no penalty was imposed and no conviction was recorded.

Bloxham School's website states Mr Cruden teaches

French across all age groups and holds weekly touch-rugby training sessions in the summer term, as well as organising early morning swimming practice.

Bloxham School's Kate Keating said: "I can confirm that a member of staff appeared at court in Edinburgh in December."

"The case was granted an absolute discharge and did not result in a conviction."

"The safeguarding of our students is our utmost priority and all correct procedures were followed throughout."

"In the light of this verdict, and following legal and local authority advice, the member of staff returned to work in January. Oxfordshire safeguarding and child protection has since re-examined the case and confirmed it is appropriate for the individual to resume their role."

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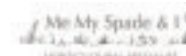
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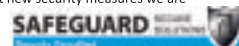
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## Firefighters of the future ride on engines and try their hands with hosepipes as Scouts visit station

THE next generation of potential firefighters got to try out the equipment as a group of more than 30 Cub Scouts toured Banbury Fire Station.

The young boys and girls from the 1st Grimsbury group visited to learn more about how people can stay safe in their homes as well as the work the fire service does in the community.

During the tour, on February 12, the children were questioned on how to prevent fires and how they can be extinguished.

As a reward they were all given the fire safety badge to add to their collection.

One of the Scouts, 10-year-old Georgia Boulton said: "This is an evening I'll remember for a long time."

"I got a ride on the fire engine and got to use a hosepipe and spray water."

"There were so many buttons and lights, it was like being in a spaceship."

The cubs were each given the chance to sit in the fire engine's driver's seat, try on a helmet, and have a go with the hosepipe.

It was not all plain sailing though, as halfway through the tour the crew had to leave when they were called out to an incident.

But fortunately it was only to help free someone who had locked themselves in a room.

Adult volunteer Alex Lyczkowski said: "The visit was an excellent way of learning about what the fire service does and how people can keep safe at home."

"One of the great things about being an adult volunteer with Scouts is that we get to go places, such as on to a fire engine,



The 1st Grimsbury Scout Group won badges for their visit – which involved flashing lights and an engine ride – to Banbury's fire station

which members of the public cannot normally do.

"Watching the Cubs bursting with excitement at the chance to climb aboard a real fire engine was so rewarding and I also gained some really valuable safety help and advice."

Nigel Taylor, from the Scout Association, said: "Educating Scouts on important safety issues, the valuable work of emergency services and

working together, we can build stronger, safer communities, which is integral to the scouting vision."

"Visits to community groups and services help young people develop valuable life skills, increase social awareness and positively impacts individuals and wider society."

Other activities coming up for the children include ice skating and a night hike.

## Firm in £40k fine over finger crush

Heating company found in breach of health and safety rules by executive

Kieran Davey  
kdavey@nqo.com

A HEATING company has been fined £40,000 after a worker crushed his fingers in a hydraulic press.

Banbury Magistrates' Court heard a Walraven Ltd employee had set up the press without the safety being applied, and when he accidentally activated the machine, it crushed the tips of his index finger and thumb.

The Health and Safety Execu-

tive carried out an investigation into the incident, which happened on March 12 last year.

It found that it had been common practice at the site to leave the safety off during the press set-up.

They also found the risk assessment for the work was inadequate and was not reviewed regularly.

The company, based in Thorpe Way, Banbury, pleaded guilty on February 9 to breaching regulations on use of equipment and health and safety.

It was also told to pay costs of £1,353.60.

Walraven Ltd general manager Gary Gardener said: "We are a family business with firm links to the local community through both our charitable activities

and a strong commitment to staff welfare and social responsibility."

"We would like to express our sadness at the injury sustained to one of our valued employees, and relief that he returned to full health and rejoined the team."

"We have gone to great lengths to review and improve our health and safety policies and ensure we prevent any future incidents."

HSE inspector Leon Donovan said: "A risk assessment needs to be suitable and sufficient and carried out by a competent person."

"It should identify the risks associated with all aspects of a machine's operation including setting up and maintenance."

## Businesses compete for award honours

NOMINATIONS have closed for this year's Cherwell Business Awards.

The awards celebrate north Oxfordshire companies and their employees and the results will be announced in May, during a ceremony at

Begbroke Science Park. Simon Keeping, managing director of Kärcher UK, which won Established Business award last year, said: "Being a part of the awards has helped us to bring this to a new level."

There are 10 categories, including New Business, Employer, Innovation and Creativity, Retail, Charity and Community, Business Person, Apprenticeship, Small Business and Micro Business awards.

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# Oxfordshire Listings

## Events

### THURSDAY

**Tokens of Love:** Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. 10am. Free. 01993 811456.

**Two Days At Oxford:** The Old Fire Station, Oxford. Artist John Goto. 11am-6pm. Free. 01865 305305.

**Andy Warhol:** Works from the Hall Collection: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Curated by Sir Norman Rosenthal. 10am. £10/£9. 01865 278 000.

**Collector's Prints 2016:** Bohun Gallery, Henley. 10am. 01491 76228.

**Rebecca McLynn and Patsy McArthur:** Sarah Wiseman Gallery, 40-41 South Parade, Summertown. 10am. Free. 01865 515123.

**Snowdrop Days:** Evenley Wood Garden, near Brackley. 11am. £5 adults, £1 children. 07788 207428.

**Members' Exhibition 'Red':** WOA, Bampton. 11.30am. Free. 01993 850137.

**Underneath the Westgate Family Trail:** Museum of Oxford, St. Aldates, Oxford. Discover latest finds from Westgate Shopping Centre excavations. 10am. Free. 01865 252334.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Japanese Creative Prints from 1945: Ashmolean, Oxford. 10am. Free. 01865 278000.

**Metamorphosis by The Stuff Collective:** The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. 10am. Free. 01993 811456.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho, Oxford. Sculpture by Helen Slater, paintings by Rose-Marie Caldecott, photographs by Ben Ramos & Jenny Blyth. 12pm. Free. 01865 604070.

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. 10am. Free. 01865 252334.

**Inner Country Andreea Zahiu:** North Wall Arts. 10am. Free. 01865 319450.

**Three Dimensions:** Modern Artists, Whitchurch. 10.30am. Free. 0118 9845893.

**Dance and the Woman by Lin Kerr:** The Freeborn Gallery, Didcot Girls' School. 9.30am. Free. 07833 552201.

**Ramblers walk:** Thame, Priestend, Thame. 6-mile walk to Haddenham. No dogs. 10am. 01844 215624.

**Sensing Culture:** A Tour for Blind & Partially Sighted Visitors: Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. 11am. Free, booking essential. 01865 270927.

**Pax Mongolica:** Ashmolean, Oxford. Talk examining coinage that reflects diversity of peoples living under Mongolian rule. 12pm. £5/£4. 01865 305305.

**Public Meeting:** Stand Up to Racism: Oxford Town Hall. 7pm. Free. 07503 169657.

**FRIDAY**

**Abingdon Farmers' Market:** Market Place, Abingdon. 8.30am. 01235 227266.

**Tokens of Love:** Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**Two Days At Oxford:** Old Fire Station, Oxford. See Thursday.

**Andy Warhol:** Ashmolean Museum. See Thursday.

**Collector's Prints 2016:** Bohun Gallery. See Thursday.

**Rebecca McLynn, Patsy McArthur:** Sarah Wiseman Gallery. See Thursday.

**Members' Exhibition 'Red':** WOA Gallery. See Thursday.

**Underneath the Westgate Family Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Ashmolean Museum See Thursday.

**Metamorphosis:** Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho. See Thursday.

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Inner Country Andreea Zahiu:** North Wall. See Thursday.

**Three Dimensions:** Modern Artists Gallery, Whitchurch. See Thursday.

**Dance and the Woman by Lin Kerr:** The Freeborn Gallery, Didcot Girls' School Manor Crescent, Didcot. See Thursday.

**Banbury French Market & Friends:** Cornhill, Market Place, Banbury. 9am. Free. 0845 649 0120.

**Oxford International Art Fair 2016:** Oxford Town Hall. Private view 6pm-9pm. £10. 07825 443925.

### SATURDAY

**Tokens of Love:** Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**Andy Warhol:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Collector's Prints 2016:** Bohun Gallery. See Thursday.

**Rebecca McLynn and Patsy McArthur:** Sarah Wiseman Gallery. See Thursday.

**Snowdrop Days:** Evenley Wood Garden. See Thursday.

**Members' Exhibition 'Red':** WOA Gallery, Bampton. See Thursday.

**Underneath the Westgate Family Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Metamorphosis:** Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. See Thursday.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho. See Thursday.

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Inner Country Andreea Zahiu:** North Wall. See Thursday.

**Three Dimensions:** Modern Artists Gallery. See Thursday.

**Dance and the Woman:** The Freeborn Gallery. See Thursday.

**Watlington Art Exhibition:** Watlington Primary School. 10am. £1, children free. 01491 612474.

**Bicester French Market & Friends:** Sheep Street, Bicester. See Saturday. 9am. Free. 0845 6490120.

**21CC:** 21st Century Challenges: Mathematical Institute, Oxford. 9.30am. £7-£8.

**Neil Marchant: Nebula XXI:** Cornerstone, Didcot. 10am. Free. 01235 515144.

**Walk (Fieldpaths):** Brill Windmill car park, Brill. 9.5 miles. A hilly, full-day walk from Brill to Piddington, returning via Boarstall. Bring picnic and fluids. Dogs on leads. 10am. 07931 484161.

**Antique & Collectors Market:** Kidlington Methodist Church. 10am. Free. 01865 371494.

**The Oxford International Art Fair 2016:** Oxford Town Hall. Live. 11am-5pm. Free.

**Oxford Town Hall Tour:** Museum of Oxford, St. Aldates, Oxford. 11am. £5 on day/£4.50 adv. 01865 252334.

**Mystery in Mesopotamia:** Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. 11am. 01865 305305.

**SUNDAY**

**Tokens of Love:** Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**Andy Warhol:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Snowdrop Days:** Evenley Wood Garden. See Thursday.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Metamorphosis:** Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. See Thursday.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho. See Thursday.

**Kidlington French Market & Friends:** High Street, Kidlington. 9am. Free. 0845 6490120.

**Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers:** SP358196, Spendlove Centre car park, Charlbury. Leisurely 8.5-mile walk via Evenlode Valley and Chilson with picnic lunch. 10am. 07950 388090.

**Haddenham Antiques & Collectors**

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at [thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events](http://thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events)

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

**Fair:** Haddenham Village Hall. 10am. 07403 951682.

**National Garden Scheme:** Lime Close, 35 Henleys Lane, Drayton. 3-acre garden. 2pm. £5, children free.

### MONDAY

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Dance and the Woman:** Freeborn Gallery. See Thursday.

**Kennington Portrait Group:** Museum of Oxford. Gallery Corridor. 10am. Free. 01865 252334.

### TUESDAY

**Tokens of Love:** The Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**Andy Warhol:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Underneath the Westgate Family Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Ashmolean, Oxford. See Thursday.

**Metamorphosis:** The Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho. See Thursday.

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Dance and the Woman:** The Freeborn Gallery. See Thursday.

**Mixed Years Exhibition, St Edward's School:** North Wall. 10am. Free. 01865 319450.

**Pure Land: Images of Immortals in Chinese Art:** Ashmolean, Oxford. 10am. Free. 01865 278000.

**300 years of Cartoons! And '1066: William Comes to Wallingford':** Wallingford Museum. 2pm. £5. 01491 835065.

**Historical Association, Oxford Branch:** Cheney School, Oxford. Talks by Dr Susan Doran, Jesus College, on 'Did Elizabeth I's gender matter?' and Prof Michael Broers, Lady Margaret Hall on 'The French revolution.'. 4.15pm. £2.

**Green Party Public Meeting – Charlbury Solar Farm:** Corn Exchange, Witney. 7.30pm. Free. 01993 772871.

### WEDNESDAY

**Tokens of Love:** The Oxfordshire Museum. See Thursday.

**Andy Warhol:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Collector's Prints 2016:** Bohun Gallery. See Thursday.

**Rebecca McLynn, Patsy McArthur:** Sarah Wiseman Gallery. See Thursday.

**Underneath the Westgate Family Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Scenes of Last Tokyo:** Ashmolean. See Thursday.

**Metamorphosis:** The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. See Thursday.

**The Magic of the Trees:** Art Jericho. See Thursday.

**Victorian Oxford Gallery Trail:** Museum of Oxford. See Thursday.

**Three Dimensions:** Modern Artists Gallery. See Thursday.

**Dance and the Woman:** The Freeborn Gallery. See Thursday.

**Mixed Years Exhibition, St Edward's School:** North Wall. See Tuesday.

**Pure Land: Images of Immortals in Chinese Art:** Ashmolean. See Tuesday.

**Walk (Fieldpaths):** Kirtlington Village Hall, car park, Kirtlington. SP501196 6.25

miles walk around Kirtlington, Weston-on the Green and Bletchingdon. Assistance dogs only. 10am. 01865 373366.

**Lecture:** 'Automation, robotics and the promise of an easier life' with Prof Judy Wajcman: Oxford Martin School. 5pm. Free. 01865 287437.

**Lecture:** 'Is Fairtrade a 21st century food security solution?': John Henry Brookes Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus, Oxford. 6pm. Free. 01865 484846.

**Sir Hugo Brunner – High Explosive:** The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. Book. 7pm. £15. 01993 810211.

**BADSBA, The Challenge of Self Building in Oxford:** The Jam Factory, Oxford. Speaker Alex Towler. 7pm. 07977 901944.

## Music

### THURSDAY

**Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, Oxford:** Lunchtime Concert. Free. 12.45pm. 01865 243216.

**Keble College, Oxford:** Early Music Festival. £15/£10/£5/free. 8pm. 0755 7219527.

**Beacon, Wantage:** Madam Butterfly 'Opera on Film'. Free saki/sushi tasting. £12. 7pm. 01235 763456.

**The Queen's College Chapel, Oxford:** Eglesfield Musical Society Concert. 7.30pm. 01865 279120.

### FRIDAY

**Keble College, Oxford:** Early Music Festival. See Thursday.

**The Northcourt, Abingdon United:** Bravado & Yes Please! £12 adv, £14 door. 7.30pm. 01235 856076.

**The Library, Middleton Cheney:** Devout Coward. Words and music celebrating Noel Coward. £8/child £4. 7.30pm. 01295 712949.

**Cornerstone, Didcot:** White Horse Whisperers with support from Sophronie. 8pm. 01235 515144.

**The White House, Oxford:** Folk Club open night. £2. 8.30pm. 01865 768128.

**General Foods S&S Club, Banbury:** C.Ody. 9pm. 01295 252852.

**Angel Witney:** Badlands. Free. 9pm. 01993 703238.

### SATURDAY

**The Queen's College, Shulman Auditorium, Oxford:** Eglesfield Musical Society Saturday recital. 1.30pm. 01865 279120.

**Keble College, Oxford:** Keble College Early Music Festival. See Thursday.

**University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford:** Brahms Requiem and Tallis Spem in alium. £10-£20/£5 students. 01865 305305.

**Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford:** Celebrate St David's Day with the Oxford Welsh. £10. 7.30pm. 01235 203929.

**Aston and Cote Village Hall:** Rob Terry trio. £10. 7.30pm. 01993 850164.

**Thame Snooker Club:** 50 Shades of Soul. £5 on the door. 7.30pm.

**Westcott Sports and Social Club:** Amanda Russell and Alan Lovell. £7/£5. 7.30pm. 01296 651855.

**Lime Walk Methodist Church, Headington:** The Bollin Consort.

7.30pm. 01865 857007.

**St Mary-le-more Church, Wallingford:** John Mills Classical Guitar Recital. Legendary classical guitarist. £10/£8. 7.30pm. 07960 083947.

**The Wheatsheaf, High St, Oxford:** The Pastel Frontier, Shrinking Violets, Amoral Compass. £4.50. 8.20pm. 01865 395327.

**Headington Con Club:** The Ray Peters Band. £5. 8.30pm. 01865 439400.

**The Rock of Gibraltar, Bletchingdon:** Mudslide Morris and the Revelators. 9pm. 07790 646028.

**Coty Arms, Burford:** James Morgan. Free. 9pm. 01993 822227.

**White Hart, Wolvercote:** Pete McCray. Free. 9pm. 01865 511978.

**Six Bells, Headington:** The Summits. Free. 9pm. 07715 563613.

**Littlebury Hotel, Bicester:** Kev G. Free. 9pm. 07941 416722.

### SUNDAY

**Keble College, Oxford:** Early Music Festival. See Thursday.

**The Prince of Wales, Iffley:** Mudslide Morris & the Revelators. Blues and boogie. Free. 3pm. 07790 646028.

**Wolfson College, Oxford:** Violin & Piano Recital: Sulki Yu & Chiao-Ying Chang. £12/£10/£5 students. 5pm. 01865 274100.

**The Red Lion, Brightwell cum Sotwell:** The Other Way Up. Jazz. Free. 6pm. 01491 837373.

**The Jam Factory, Oxford:** Flamenco Intimo. Amarita Vargas. 8pm. £12/£6. 8pm. 07526 487492.

### MONDAY

**The Haven Club at The Bullingdon, Oxford:** Eric Bell (original Thin Lizzy guitarist). £12 on door, £10 adv. 8pm. 07754 501562.

### WEDNESDAY

**The Queen's College Chapel, Oxford:** Organ Recital. Richard Moore (London). 1.10pm. 01865 279125.

**Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford:** Oxford University Philharmonia: Mahler's 2nd Symphony ('Resurrection') and the Bartók Viola Concerto. Soloist Rachel Maxey. £12/£6 (student) online, £14/£7 on the door. 7.30pm.

## Theatre

### THURSDAY

**Oxford Playhouse:** King Charles III. £15-£31. 2.30pm and 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

### FRIDAY

**Oxford Playhouse:** King Charles III. See Thursday. 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

### SATURDAY

**North Wall Arts:** Tadpoles. 11am. Recommended age 5+. £8 (£6 concessions). 01865 319450.

**Oxford Playhouse:** King Charles III. See Thursday. 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

### TUESDAY

**Oxford Central Library:** Find Your Voice Showcase Finale. 6.30pm. Free. 01865 812150

**The Old Fire Station, Oxford:** Macbeth. 7.30pm. £12, £10. 01865 305305.

### WEDNESDAY

**Keble O'Reilly Theatre, Oxford:** The Marriage of Kim K. 7.30pm. £7-£10. 07913 988008.



# Green team blitz streets in bid to clean up estate

Council initiative seeking to tackle litter and maintain housing areas' cleanliness

**Kieran Davey**  
kdavey@nqo.com

ROAD sweepers and litter clearers were out in force in a Banbury estate last week.

Members of the council's green team were tackling litter and mess in the Bretch Hill area from Monday through to Friday.

It was part of a Cherwell District Council initiative, which has been running for 10 years, to help improve the appearance of housing areas.

Cherwell District Council lead member for clean and green Debbie Pickford said: "Having just finished our first blitz of the year in Bicester we are now working our magic on one of Banbury's largest estates."

"The idea of the blitzes is to give residents a head start in keeping their local estate tidy. By clearing it of rubbish now all residents need to do is take responsibility for their own litter in the future to keep the area gleaming."

Residents were also able to sign up for free bulky waste collections



Street cleanser Ben Dyche, Debbie Pickford, Cherwell's assistant recycling officer Charlotte Smith, and mechanical sweeper operator Pete Castle before the litter blitz in the Bretch Hill area of Banbury

for up to three items. And on Thursday there was a recycling roadshow in Orchard Way from 3pm to 5pm.

Mrs Pickford added: "Our

street cleansing team will be going above and beyond their usual duties to get Bretch Hill looking pristine but it doesn't end there.

"By offering initiatives such as

the recycling roadshow and free bulky waste collections, it will hopefully encourage the residents to join in and help keep the area clean and green for everyone."

## Padded bins to address noise

NEW padded recycling bins have been installed in Highlands Road in Banbury following a campaign from local residents.

Last year, the old bins were removed after people complained that they were being kept up at night by the noise of breaking bottles.

But Hardwick councillor Surinder Dhesi led the campaign to get a more resident-friendly version of the bins put in.

And these were installed last Wednesday.

Mrs Dhesi said: "The result couldn't be better because the council has provided a new recycling bin with specially adapted, sound absorbing foam, as well as colourful and welcoming graphics on the front."



**Hardwick councillor Surinder Dhesi**

## Fly-tipping problems

MORE than 60 bags of rubbish were dumped at a Banbury recycling bank.

A resident complained to the council that dozens of rubbish and carrier bags had been dumped at the centre in Ferristown. It has since been cleared by officers and sorted so that textiles could be sent for recycling.

Anyone with information about who is responsible should call 01295 227007 or email customer.service@cherwell-dc.gov.uk with the subject line "Ferristown flytip".

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#### Price includes

- Private coach travel from your local area
- Three nights' stay with three course evening meal & cooked breakfast
- Visits to Scarborough, Whitby, York & Harrogate



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# Thriller is best-kept secret

**SECRET IN THEIR EYES (15, 111 mins)** A thriller/romance with Chiwetel Ejiofor, Nicole Kidman, Julia Roberts and Alfred Molina. Director: Billy Ray

HOLLYWOOD has never been shy about resetting the delicate, glittering jewels of foreign cinema as gaudy showcases for A-list stars.

When Argentinian writer-director Juan Jose Campanella won the Oscar for his 2009 thriller *El Secreto De Sus Ojos*, it was only a matter of time before an English-language version surfaced.

The sturdy structure and hairpin twists remain firmly in place in writer-director Billy Ray's *Secret In Their Eyes*, but the original's politically charged setting – the volatile period before Argentina's Dirty War – has been replaced by the paranoia and fear that percolated across the US after the September 11 attacks.

In 2002 Los Angeles, FBI counter-terrorism officer Ray Karsten (Chiwetel Ejiofor) assesses possible threats emanating from a local mosque.

He is called to a crime scene close to the mosque and identifies the raped and mutilated body of a girl in a dumpster as Caroline Cobb (Zoe Graham), the daughter of his good friend, Jessica Cobb (Julia Roberts), who works as an investigator for district attorney Martin Morales (Alfred Molina).

Flanked by his partner Bumpy Willis (Dean Norris), Ray promises Jess that he will apprehend the killer and they identify a comic book-obsessed misfit called Marzin (Joe Cole) as the prime suspect.

Ray and assistant DA Claire Sloan (Nicole Kidman) attempt to entrap Marzin, but Morales warns them off because the oddball is a police informant. "That boy is untouchable. Welcome to the war on terror," growls the district attorney.

Thirteen years later, Ray identifies a man who he believes is Marzin in disguise.

He reunites with Jess and Claire to solve the case, but reopening old wounds comes at a terrible price.

Unfolding in dual time frames 13 years apart, *Secret In Their Eyes* is a competent update of a vastly superior tale of retribution and regret.

Ejiofor, Roberts and Kidman are solid in underwritten roles, the latter distinguishing herself in an electrifying interrogation room scene.

A bold final flourish should stun audiences who haven't had the intense, nerve-racking pleasure of watching the original.

**THE FOREST (15, 93 mins)** A horror/romance with Natalie Dormer and Taylor Kinney. JASON Zada's formulaic horror might be dismissed as exploitative and tasteless for conjuring supernatural scares in Aokigahara Forest, a notorious real-life hotspot for Japanese suicides at the foot of Mount Fuji.

But that would credit *The Forest* with more intelligence, guile and intent than are on display in its ham-fisted and plodding script.

The hodgepodge of genre clichés and malnourished, two-dimensional characters fail to make us shift in our seats, let alone jump out of them with genuine fright.

Zada's direction is equally poor; lazily going through the motions, while performances from Natalie Dormer and Taylor Kinney are as wooden as the swaying timbers.

Police in Japan telephone Sara Price (Dormer) in America to inform her that identical twin Jess (Dormer again with different hair colour) is lost, presumed dead, in the dense sprawl of Aokigahara.



Chiwetel Ejiofor in *Secret In Their Eyes*, in which he plays an FBI counter-terrorism officer

Sara is initially waylaid by a woman who stores the bodies of the suicides in her basement.

Thankfully, Jess isn't one of the corpses and Sara makes her way to a roadside hotel, where she befriends a reporter called Aiden (Taylor Kinney).

He offers to help search for the sibling in the company of a professional guide, in exchange for using Sara's turmoil as the basis for an article.

Dormer is emotionally frozen throughout and fails to catalyse any palpable sparks of screen chemistry with Kinney.

Messy flashbacks to the sisters' past hamper any half-hearted attempts to generate dramatic momentum.

## Cake Bookworm

**Legoland by Gerard Woodward, hardback by Picador, £14.99 (ebook £10.43).**

GERARD Woodward is probably best known for his trilogy of stories about the Jones family – *August*, *I'll Go To Bed At Noon* and *A Curious Earth*. But his latest offering, *Legoland*, sees him once again return to writing short stories. The stories range from the mundane to the surreal. There's the beautifully observed story of Williamina who leaves her husband only to find herself receiving regular visits from persistent suitors. Then there's the man who creates an exact replica of his sitting room in his basement – but everything is upside down, and the writer who ends up on the run after he finds himself caught up in a bloody revolution. A strong sense of black humour runs throughout these 15 stories. They will leave you amused, sometimes confused and often unnerved – there are some you might want to avoid reading

before bed. But these beautifully written stories will captivate you, and stay with you for a long time.

**The Narrow Bed by Sophie Hannah, hardback by Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99 (ebook £7.49).**

THIS is the latest outing for what must be the most off-beat but likeable characters in crime fiction – DC Simon Waterhouse and his wife Sergeant Charlie Zailer. They and the rest of the Culver Valley police team must track down a murderer, code-named Billy Dead Mates because of his habit of killing pairs of friends. Central to the investigation are spiky, stand-up comedian Kim Tribbeck and strident feminist Sondra Halliday, who fires off vitriolic blogs and wages battle with all and sundry on social media. But as usual with Sophie Hannah's novels, the whodunnit element of the plot is a tiny fraction of what makes this a superb read. Deeply satisfying and

somehow life-affirming, it leaves you longing for your next fix of Waterhouse and Zailer.

**The Maker Of Swans by Parac O'Donnell, hardback by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.99 (ebook £8.99).**

THE *Maker Of Swans* is the intriguing tale of Mr Crowe, his mute ward Clara, his authoritative adversaries and his ever-loyal servant, Eustace. A delightful mix of paranormal and Gothic, this novel is richly descriptive and the reader cannot help but try and cast the main characters in their mind, as the narrative is beautifully filmic. The story opens at an eerie manor house and gunshots are heard all around. Eustace is tasked with clearing up the mess his mysterious master Mr Crowe has left behind and we soon learn that the events of this night will have serious consequences for everyone on the estate. An impressive debut novel.

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Jack Westbrook (right) scored Banbury United's opening goal in their 2-0 victory over Bishops Cleeve

# Make that six on the bounce

## Westbrook and Barcelos fire Banbury to win

BANBURY United made it six wins in a row as they beat Bishops Cleeve 2-0 in Division 1 South & West.

Mike Ford's men stayed fourth and comfortably inside the Evo-Stik Southern League play-off positions as a result.

Felipe Barcelos went close early on for the Puritans against mid-table Cleeve, shooting straight at goalkeeper Sam Gilder.

Zac McEachran and Mark Bell then fired wide as the conditions deteriorated in the heavy rain.

But Banbury took a deserved lead on 38 minutes when Jack Westbrook slid the ball into the back of

the net at the far post from Bell's free-kick.

After the break top-scorer Ricky Johnson shot straight at Gilder, while Cleeve's Jordan Bryan fired just wide.

The Puritans added a second when Barcelos stroked home Callum White's cross on 58 minutes for his first goal since signing for the Puritans at the beginning of January.

Cleeve's Aaron Drake hit the bar, but Banbury were comfortable.

**Banbury Utd:** Harding, White, Hopkins, Nash, Westbrook, Gunn, McEachran (Browne 66), Stanbridge (DMartin 79), Johnson, Barcelos (Howards 71), Bell. Subs not used: Steedman, Wise.

**Attendance:** 127.

LATEST TABLE										
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE										
Division 1 South & West										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Winchester City	29	20	4	5	78	35	64			
-----										
Cinderford Tn	26	19	5	2	52	15	62			
Swindon Sup	28	19	4	5	55	26	61			
<b>Banbury Utd</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>60</b>			
Taunton Tn	26	17	6	3	53	21	57			
-----										
North Leigh	30	17	3	10	62	32	54			
Shortwood Utd	29	16	4	9	56	45	52			
Tiverton Tn	27	14	9	4	49	29	51			
Evesham Utd	29	13	9	7	53	28	48			
Didcot Tn	31	14	6	11	64	47	48			
AFC Totton	30	12	4	14	60	57	40			
Yate Tn	31	10	8	13	38	43	38			
Larkhall Ath	28	9	7	12	44	47	34			
Bishops Cleeve	24	9	7	8	34	41	34			
Mangotsfield	29	8	8	13	41	50	32			
Slimbridge	28	8	7	13	30	37	31			
Marlow	30	9	4	17	44	60	31			
Wimbome Tn	31	8	4	19	50	66	28			
Bridgwater Tn	30	8	4	18	31	57	28			
Wantage Tn	30	6	3	21	33	70	21			
-----										
Burnham	31	4	4	23	30	78	16			
Bashley	28	0	1	27	9	128	1			

## Bulls stretch the gap with five-try show

BANBURY RFC ran in five tries to convincingly beat title rivals Earlsdon and open up a nine-point lead at the top of the table.

Bulls secured a 33-0 victory over the Coventry-based side to put themselves in pole position for promotion from Midlands 2 West (South) with five games remaining.

The leaders could not be stopped at Bodicote Park and Joe Mills made it 20 tries in as many games when he crossed to make it 5-0.

Bulls had the bit between their teeth and Sean Bannister crashed over, with Ed Phillips adding the extras.

The hosts wanted more and Phillips converted his own try to rack up 19 points in the first 20 minutes.

After the break, Bannister crossed and captain Phillips added the extras.

Jimmy Manley then helped himself to a try, Phillips converting.

STARS with Claire Petulengro

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ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

0906 585 4360

You have been experiencing some really mixed emotions which have made it hard for you to know what to do. Take your time. Who said you have to rush? Allow yourself time this week to process your emotions. You can choose the right path if you do my friend. Geminis bring new work opportunity. Ring now so I can tell you what else your future holds.

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

0906 585 4366

Something which was not working is given a boost of energy by Mars and you start to feel as if things are finally going your way again. A great week to go for job interviews or to take tests, as your thinking will be clear and your presentation impressive. The Sun helps you to heal a rift which you were beginning to think could never be repaired. Ring now for insight.

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

0906 585 4361

Your ruling planet Venus is making you more emotional than usual. So much so in fact, that you may end up accusing your close ones of things they haven't done. Careful Taurus, you could end up forcing a loved one's hand if you're not careful. Listening, rather than talking can fill in the real facts you need to know. Ring now to how foreign shores beckon and mix with work opportunities.

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

0906 585 4362

I know you were confused and you lost your way, but this week you're finally back in the land of the living. A difficult air between you and a family member is improved by the involvement of a third party and life starts to feel as if it's back on track again. Text messages tell lies so be careful of what you believe. Ring now so we can make the most of your week ahead.

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

0906 585 4363

Travel plans bring mix ups and last minute changes, so be ready to think on your feet and be flexible to their needs. Your ruling planet the Moon brings out your confessional side at the weekend when you may end up telling secrets you've been keeping since last year. This can be a positive thing, as you'll soon discover. Ring now to find out what Venus is planning for you.

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

0906 585 4364

You feel a strong need to get answers and you don't care who you have to insult to get them. This forceful attitude could earn you a few enemies this week though, so try a softer approach if you want to keep friendships intact. You may not realise it, but you are coming across in a rather harsh manner. Ring now to hear how romance and white lies seem to go hand in hand.

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

0906 585 4364

If you know something is not working in your life then this is the week you will be doing something about it. Children are prominent in your chart as you help someone younger than you to make a major decision with their life. Don't feel forced to confess all to friends who don't know as much as they are claiming. You're allowed a personal life. Ring now for support.

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

0906 585 4367

There is a sense of adventure in your chart which will see you willing to tackle things the rest of the zodiac will shy away from. This is the week to address the issues which you were hiding from last week. You come across as powerful and knowledgeable, so use it to your full advantage. Aries prove good confidantes if you want to share your secrets. Ring me for news in full.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

0906 585 4368

I know you've had to do a lot of growing up recently and you've felt pressured to support not just yourself, but those close to you too. From Tuesday, others begin to return the favour and you no longer feel so loaded down. Talks with family also help you work towards your dreams as a team and not as a solo artist as was previously the case. Ring now for a romantic revelation.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

0906 585 4369

You can't seem to get a certain person off of your mind, but give them time to come to you so that you can know the feeling is mutual. Why should you do all the running? Have a little more self confidence Capricorn. If you believe you're worth fighting for, then others will too. Tuesday brings good career news. Ring now to hear why you may want to check your passport is up to date.

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

0906 585 4370

There is far more to current dramas than you think. Try to bide your time and don't believe what third parties tell you, as they're likely to have been privy to false information. It's an emotional weekend, as you realise what you do and don't want in your life. You leave this week with a clearer idea of where you're going and with whom. Phone now so I can show you your future.

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

0906 585 4370

Although you don't approve of your close one's behaviour, you will get some idea of why they displayed such dramatic reaction. You work out how to move on and how to build a better future. You're back in the driving seat and ready to make your life the best it can be. Animals link to a meeting with someone who is a major player in your future. Ring now to reveal more.

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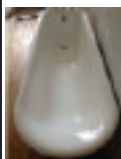
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## This spacy estate is simply Superb

David Duffy  
david.duffy@nqo.com

EVERYTHING about the Skoda Superb is huge – except the bills to run it.

Now in its third generation, the Czech carmaker's flagship is more comfortable, more spacious, yet offers lower running costs.

If you want maximum carrying capacity for minimum cash, this car is where you should start your search.

With prices starting at under £20,000, in hatchback and estate versions, it comes with a choice of seven engines and five trim levels.

Longer and wider than the previous model, its longer wheelbase gives even more room in the cabin. The space for those in the front is impressive, and the rear legroom is awesome.

The boot space is cavernous. The estate has 660 litres of carrying capacity with the rear seats in place and 1,950 litres with the seats down – an increase of 85 litres over the previous model.

This is a big car that comfortably handles just about anything you can throw at it. And what is remarkable about this space machine is how good it is to drive. Quiet and comfortable at speed, it rides and handles much better than such a massive car deserves to.

An electronic drive mode se-

lector also allows you to choose whether you want to set up the car for a sportier ride or go for ultimate comfort.

And it is the blend of practicality, elegant design and value for money that led The Sunday Times to name the Superb Estate as the best large estate car on the market as part of its annual Top 100 Cars special.

All Superb models have alloy wheels, air conditioning, LED rear lights, Bluetooth, DAB digital radio and a touchscreen infotainment system. An electronic safety system is also fitted across the range, with the extra benefit of multi-collision brake included – triggering automatic brake intervention upon detection of a collision – as standard.

### Auto facts

**Model:** Skoda Superb Estate SE L Executive Estate  
**Price:** £26,320  
**Insurance group:** 19E  
**Fuel consumption (Combined):** 67.3mpg  
**Top speed:** 135mph  
**Length:** 485.6cm/192in  
**Width:** 186.4cm/74in  
**Luggage capacity:** 23.3 cu ft  
**Fuel tank capacity:** 14.5 gallons/66 litres  
**CO2 emissions:** 110g/km  
**Warranty:** 3 years/60,000 miles



The Skoda Superb Estate SE L Executive Estate

The test model packed in everything from bi-xenon headlights, leather upholstery with heated seats and satellite navigation with an eight-inch touchscreen, to 18-inch Zenith alloy wheels and an electrically-operated boot.

On the safety front, the Superb is available with blind spot detection, rear traffic alert, park assist, making reversing out of parking spaces safer, and in perpendicular spaces either nose-first or tail-first and, on semi-automatic gearbox-equipped models, traffic jam assist.

And if you want proof of just how upmarket the Superb has moved, all SE models now also include two umbrellas, one stowed in each of the front doors – a feature only rivalled by the likes of Rolls-Royce.

## Auction interest grows in Defenders

DEMAND for late-plate Land Rover Defenders is on the rise at auction, reports vehicle information firm Glass's, as the iconic 4x4 has stopped production after almost 70 years.

Low mileage examples are being snapped up by dealers keen to fulfil a burst of consumer interest in the model as it comes to the end of the road.

Jayson Whittington, manager of commercial vehicle valuations, said that Defenders tended to perform well at auction due to low supply, but that there had been a noticeable increase in interest in recent months.

"While production is only now

ceasing, order books for new Defenders have been closed for some months and there has been a noticeable increase in demand for used units at auction, with dealers actively seeking out late plated, low mileage examples to fulfil what appears to be growing retail demand.

"It may be that this increased interest is probably, in part, being driven by a nostalgic urge to own one of the final generation of this much-loved icon."

Jayson urged caution, however, for those who may be thinking of buying a Defender as a potential investment.

"Our view is that, while it is not

inconceivable that values could rise a little further in the future, we are many, many years away from any investment of this kind paying worthwhile dividends.

"People who want to buy a Defender should do so for the same reasons as they have been doing for decades – that it is an incredibly well-proven and capable 4x4 that will keep going in the toughest of conditions."

He added that, generally, values would remain heavily dependent on condition and mileage.

And units that show clear evidence of having been used commercially do not live up to price expectations.

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### In brief

- A RARE Aston Martin that has been owned by the same family for almost 60 years is set to be sold for only the second time since it left the showroom. The DB2/4 Mk III, originally sold to a Mr W Griffith, of Somerset in 1958, was bought by a Mr Marcus Green in 1960. The car is still in his garage today, now owned by his son-in-law, a skilled mechanical engineer who completely restored the car over more than two years. With 69,000 miles on the clock, the DB2/4 has a history documented with invoices dating back to the 1960s. It is to be sold at the Race Retro sale on February 27-28, at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire. The estimate? A cool £160,000-£180,000.
- THE Land Rover Defender is a man's car that spends most of its time in the countryside. Aviva Car Insurance has run some numbers on the iconic off-roader to paint a picture of typical owners. Over half of those vehicles insured with Aviva live in rural areas, They're usually parked off the road in areas including the West Country.

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